



NRCS Grassland Reserve program

Workbook for Preparing Applications New Hampshire Grassland Reserve Program Fiscal Year 2005

Introduction

The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) is a voluntary program that helps landowners and operators restore and protect grassland and pastureland. Eligible land includes grassland, pastureland, land that contains forbs or shrub land when these lands have potential to serve as wildlife habitat or significant ecological value.

Enrollment Options

Enrollment options in GRP include permanent easements as well as 10-year, 15-year, 20-year, or 30-year rental agreements. Restoration agreements are also possible when used in conjunction with any easement or rental agreement.

Restrictions

When a landowner enters into a GRP agreement, they are prohibited from producing any agricultural commodity (other than hay) that requires breaking the soil surface and any other activity they would disturb the surface of the land except for appropriate land management activities identified in the easement deed or rental agreement.

Enrollment Requirements

Applicants must submit an application, Form AD-1153, Application for Long-Term Contracted Assistance. For easement offers, the land is considered enrolled after NRCS makes a tentative offer of acceptance and the landowner signs an intent to continue the program (Option Agreement to Purchase: Form AD-1157). For rental agreements, the land is considered enrolled after a GRP contract is approved and signed by NRCS (Form CCC-920).

Payments

For permanent easements, NRCS will provide payment equal to the fair market value of the land, less the grazing value of the land encumbered by the easement. All of the administrative fees associated with recording the easement will be paid by NRCS including: appraisal fees, survey costs, title insurance, and recording fees.

For rental agreements, annual rental payments, as determined by FSA, and based on not more than 75% of the grazing land value, will be paid on the agreement anniversary date for the life of the agreement.

For restoration agreements, NRCS will provide up to 90% of the restoration costs on lands that have never been cultivated and up to 75% of the cost on restored grasslands or pasturelands.

New Hampshire Grassland Reserve Program Fiscal Year 2005

GRP Application Workbook

Prepared by:
(Landowner)

Parcel Name:
Town, County

Date Submitted:

Application is for (circle one):

Permanent Conservation Easement
10-year Rental Agreement
15-year Rental Agreement
20-year Rental Agreement
30-year Rental Agreement

This application includes a Restoration Agreement: Yes No

GRP funding Request (From Part 7.G) \$ _____

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GRP Application Workbook

F/Y2005

Part 1: Applicant Information

A. Landowner(s) Name_____

B. Address:_____

Town, State, Zip_____

County:_____

C. Phone:_____ Cell:_____

D. Email:_____

If the parcel is being rented or leased:

E. Renter(s) Name_____

F. Address:_____

Town, State, Zip_____

County:_____

G. Phone:_____ Cell:_____

H. Email:_____

I. Is the landowner considered a non-profit (503-C) organization? Yes No

H. Is Form AD-1153, Application for Long-Term contracted Assistance, signed by the landowner and attached to this workbook?

(Required to be considered for participation)

Yes No

Part 2: Information on the Subject Parcel.

A. Is the parcel privately owned? Yes No

If no, explain _____

B. Total acres: _____ Acres

(Offers for participation must include no less than 20 contiguous acres.)

C. Current land use/land cover

(Eligible parcels must be primarily grassland or pastureland. Some forested cropland or wetland acres may be allowed if it is determined to be incidental to the eligible land when it is considered necessary for the efficient administration of an agreement or easement.)

_____ percent pasture or hayland, _____ percent cropland, _____

percent forestland _____ percent wetland, _____

other land, explain: _____

D. Is the parcel part of an existing grazing operation? _____

E. Are there currently any deed restrictions on the property? Yes No

If yes, explain: _____

F. Is there a current NRCS conservation plan on the easement parcel? Yes No

If no, what is the schedule for getting a conservation plan? _____

G. Does the subject parcel serve as habitat that promotes and enhances plant and animal biodiversity? Explain

H. Is there a restoration agreement included as part of this application? (Ad-1155 required)

If yes, briefly explain nature of the restoration:

Part 3: Past and Future Use of the Subject Parcel

By entering into a GRP agreement, the landowner agrees to maintain the parcel in permanent grassland or pastureland for the duration of the agreement, or forever, if the agreement is a permanent easement.

A. History of land use on the subject parcel and future intentions on use: _____

B. If this parcel is not protected, what is the likelihood of this parcel being converted to other agricultural uses (planting of cultivated crops, etc.)? Explain any imminent plans.

C. If this parcel is not protected, what is the likelihood of this parcel being converted to non-agricultural use? Explain any eminent danger.

Part 4: Soil Resource Information.

- A. Acres classified as Prime Farmland Soils¹: _____ Acres
- B. Acres classified as Unique Farmland²: _____ Acres
- C. Acres classified as soils of Statewide Importance¹: _____ Acres
- D. Acres classified as soils of Local Importance: _____ Acres
- E. Other soils _____ acres
- F. Total of A. through E., above: _____ acres.
(Must agree with Part 2, Question B)
- G. Is there highly erodable land on any parcel (not just the subject parcel) owned by the applicant³? Yes No
- H. Is there a completed AD-1026, (self-certification of compliance with sodbuster and swampbuster) on file with the Farm Service Agency (FSA)? Yes No
- If no, when will the AD-1026 be filed? _____
- I. If there is forestland on the parcel: is there a forest management plan? Yes No
- J. Has the landowner reviewed the revised easement deed for GRP and understands the terms and conditions of the easement ?
Yes No

¹ According to the most recent NRCS County Soil Survey and the current Agricultural Evaluation Worksheet located on the NRCS webpage at: <http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov>

² According to current land use assessment and the definition of Unique farmland as defined in the soil survey data dictionary located on the NRCS webpage at: <http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov>

³ A listing of highly erodable soils is available from the NRCS Websight at: <http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov> or by contacting the county NRCS office or county conservation district office.

**Part 4. Has a survey been completed on this parcel, completed by a land surveyor certified to work within the State of New Hampshire?
If so, please provide the following information:**

A. Name of surveyer:_____

B. Name of Firm:_____

C. Address:_____

Town, State, Zip_____

County:_____

D. Phone:_____ Email:_____

E. Date survey completed:_____

**Part 5. Has an appraisal for a conservation easement been completed on this parcel?
If so, please provide the following information:**

B. Name of Appraiser: _____

B. Name of Firm: _____

C. Address: _____

Town, State, Zip _____

County: _____

E. Phone: _____ Email: _____

F. Type of appraisal completed: _____
(Copy of appraisal not required but should be available upon request)

G. Date appraisal completed: _____

H. Has the appraiser included a disclosure statement indicating he/she accepts full responsibility for the appraisal and he/she has no interest in the land?

Yes No

If no, explain: _____

I. Appraised Fair Market Value (FMV) of the conservation easement: \$ _____

J. Negotiated Purchase Price (NPP) \$ _____

K. Does the landowner(s) have Form CCC-526: adjusted gross income limits currently on file with FSA?

Yes No

L. If no, is the landowner aware of the adjusted gross income limitations? Yes No

M. If no, when will the landowner(s) have the necessary CCC-526 forms filed with FSA?

Part 6. Supporting Documentation

A. Describe the nature and extent of other parcels of land in the vicinity (city or town) that are protected open space.

B. Describe the land use and land cover of the parcels immediately surrounding the easement parcel.

C. Is the easement parcel listed in the National or State registry of historical or archaeological sites? Yes No

If yes, explain: _____

D. Describe any aesthetical, educational and/or environmental value in protecting this parcel.

R. Briefly describe the social and/or economic benefits of acquiring this conservation easement. . _____

Part 7A. GRP Funding Request for Conservation Easements

- A. Estimated fair market value of the conservation easement less grazing value \$ _____
- B. Estimated survey costs..... \$ _____
- C. Estimated appraisal costs.....\$ _____
- D. Estimated legal and other closing costs.....\$ _____
- E. Cost of conservation practices as identified in a restoration agreement..... \$ _____
- F. Total GRP funding request (Sum of C through G)..... \$ _____

Part 7B. GRP Funding Request for Rental Agreement

- A. Allowed rental rate per acre (\$ _____) times total acres (_____)
times total number of year (_____) in agreement.....\$ _____
- B. Cost of conservation practices as identified in a restoration agreement..... \$ _____
- C. Total GRP funding request (Sum of A and B)..... \$ _____

Part 8. Required Attachments to Application

Forms:

- A. AD-1153 Application for Long-Term Contracted Assistance
- B. AD-1154 Long Term Agreement
- C. AD-1154, Attachment A: General Provisions
(no signature line available. Landowner to sign and date at bottom of 1st page)
- D. AD-1154, Special Provisions
- E. AD-1155, Conservation Plan and Schedule of Operations (For restoration agreements)
- F. AD-1026 , Highly Erodable land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification
- D. CCC-526 Self certification of adjusted gross income.
(A separate CCC-526 must be filled out and signed by all part-owners of the parcel, and anyone else that has a financial investment in the parcel or financial investment in the business owned and or operated by the landowner.)

Maps:

- A. The town tax map with the parcel numbers identified and parcel boundary delineated or highlighted.
- B. USGS topographic map with the parcel outlined.
- C. An NRCS soil survey map with the parcel highlighted.
- D. A map of the region (town or county) with other currently protected parcels highlighted.

Part 9. Optional Attachments

- E. Additional supporting information is attached to the application and identified as follows:

Photos _____

Appraisal _____

NRCS Conservation Plan _____

Legal documents required prior to closing on GRP conservation easements:***

- A. Appraisal report
- B. Easement boundary description
- C. Plot map, or maps, showing location of parcel boundaries and total acreage
- D. CCC-1255 Warranty Easement Deed (permanent)
- E. AD-1158 Subordination Agreement and Limited Lien Waiver
- F. Legal Description of the Easement Area and Right of Way, if applicable
- G. Survey Plat of Easement Area and Right of Way, if applicable
- H. Preliminary Certificate of Inspection/Possession
- I. Certificate of Use and Consent
- J. Preliminary Title Commitment
- K. Appraisal Report ***

**** The documents listed in 2.A-K are forwarded to OGC to have them prepare a Preliminary Title Option (PTO) for the transfer of the easement to the United States of America. The PTO is forwarded to the closing attorney and a date for the closing is set.